

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner considers the above-noted amendment when the application is examined on its merits and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1349.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 4, 2002

HOGAN & HARTSON LLP
555 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 637-5600
Customer No. 24633

By: 

Celine Jimenez Crowson
Reg. No. 40,357
David D. Nelson
Reg. No. 47,818

Attachments: Amended Version of Page 1 of Application
Marked-up Version of Page 1 of Application



AMENDED VERSION

ACCELERATED PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

#2
1st

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a method for assisting and expediting an organization's progression through the levels of the Capability Maturity Model (CMM). Specifically, the present invention relates to a method and related system for arranging and administering an organization's infrastructure and a project of interest so that the organization and the product may be more mature, as measured by the CMM.

RECEIVED

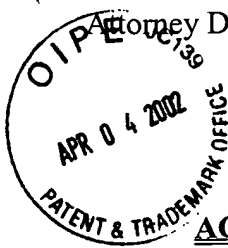
APR 09 2002

Background of the Invention

Technology Center 2100

The Capability Maturity Model® (CMM®) may refer specifically to the Capability Maturity Model for Software (SW-CMM) or, more generally, to a number of other process improvement models developed by the Software Engineering Institute (SEI) and registered to Carnegie Mellon University. The SW-CMM was the first model developed by the SEI, and it originally evolved from the need for the United States Department of Defense to have another measure besides "lowest bidder" in determining who should win project bids. Specifically, the Department of Defense desired a method to better compare and distinguish well designed and shoddy, defective products. The two major usages of the SW-CMM are: (1) as a model for Software Process Improvement (SPI) and (2) as a measure of the capability to produce quality systems. Specifically, the CMM may help a purchaser differentiate properly working product from an incomplete, nonfunctioning, poorly designed product by providing information on a producing organization and its production and development procedures.

The CMM is an example of a model-based improvement approach that focuses on creation process quality. The rationale for this focus is that, unlike hardware, manufacturing software is essentially error free (i.e., the production of the disks containing the program), but the quality defects (i.e., bugs) are produced during the concept and development process. Therefore, waiting to identify defects after creation of the product is generally difficult and costly. The CMM may be used as a

**MARKED-UP VERSION****[CMM IN A BOX]****ACCELERATED PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK**Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a method for assisting and expediting an organization's progression through the levels of the Capability Maturity Model (CMM). Specifically, the present invention relates to a method and related system for arranging and administering an organization's infrastructure and a project of interest so that the organization and the product may be more mature, as measured by the CMM.

RECEIVED**APR 09 2002**Background of the Invention**Technology Center 2100**

15 The Capability Maturity Model® (CMM®) may refer specifically to the Capability Maturity Model for Software (SW-CMM) or, more generally, to a number of other process improvement models developed by the Software Engineering Institute (SEI) and registered to Carnegie Mellon University. The SW-CMM was the first model developed by the SEI, and it originally evolved from the need for the United States Department of Defense to have another measure besides "lowest bidder" in determining who should win project bids. Specifically, the Department of Defense desired a method to better compare and distinguish well designed and shoddy, defective products. The two major usages of the SW-CMM are: (1) as a model for Software Process Improvement (SPI) and (2) as a measure of the capability to produce quality systems. Specifically, the CMM may help a purchaser differentiate properly working product from an incomplete, nonfunctioning, poorly designed product by providing information on a producing organization and its production and development procedures.

25 The CMM is an example of a model-based improvement approach that focuses on creation process quality. The rationale for this focus is that, unlike hardware, manufacturing software is essentially error free (i.e., the production of the disks containing the program), but the quality defects (i.e., bugs) are produced during the concept and development process. Therefore, waiting to identify defects after creation of the product is generally difficult and costly. The CMM may be used as a